

Some Dance Sculptures from Assam

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Although a certain amount of work has been accomplished on the architectural and sculptural traditions of Assam, there is to date no definitive study on the subject which has clearly established a chronology of the evolution of a distinct Assamese school of architecture and sculpture in its relationship to extant indigenous traditions and parallel developments in other parts of India.

Despite such a limitation and the incomplete and fragmentary nature of the evidence and the critical writing on the subject, the regional school is significant enough to demand the fuller attention of scholars. Its importance is further enhanced by the valuable material found in the excavations of the Ambari site carried out in 1969 and 1971 by the Department of Anthropology, University of Gauhati, in collaboration with the Central and State Departments of Archaeology. Many of these, including stone sculptures and terra-cotta figures, are housed in the State Museum at Gauhati, and in the Department of Anthropology, University of Gauhati. Alongside are the plaques and terra-cotta figures of the Tamreshvari Temple of a slightly later period. Finally there are the eighteenth century terra-cotta plaques of Jayasagar, Sibsagar District.

Our concern in this brief paper is to re-evaluate the sculptural figures relating to a few motifs of the earlier period (sixth to twelfth centuries) which have a relevance for a study of movement patterns, and which shed considerable light on the developments in Assam, in relation to other parts of India. In the study, *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts*,¹ an attempt was made to examine the sculptural evidence relating to the dance under three or four distinct categories. These were: (i) the *shalabhanjika* motif; (ii) the flying *vidyadhara* motif; (iii) the examples of dance movement in scenes relating to processions, performances, etc., and individual sculptures of dancers and (iv) the dance aspects of deities, normally termed as *nrttamurti*-s. Unfortunately, at that time, no examples from Assam were included, on account of the paucity of published material and because the valuable finds of Ambari and the adjoining areas had not then come to light. Nor was it possible to incorporate this evidence in the second edition of the book. A second look at the material from Assam is convincing proof of the thesis set out in that work that there appear to be certain Pan-Indian movements, which are common to all parts of India, at a given period and also that each school has a distinctive regional character, especially in the post-eleventh century period. We shall thus deal with a few select examples of these motifs from the sculptural remains of Assam, particularly Ambari, and would consider this as a necessary supplement to all that has been said on the subject in *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts*.

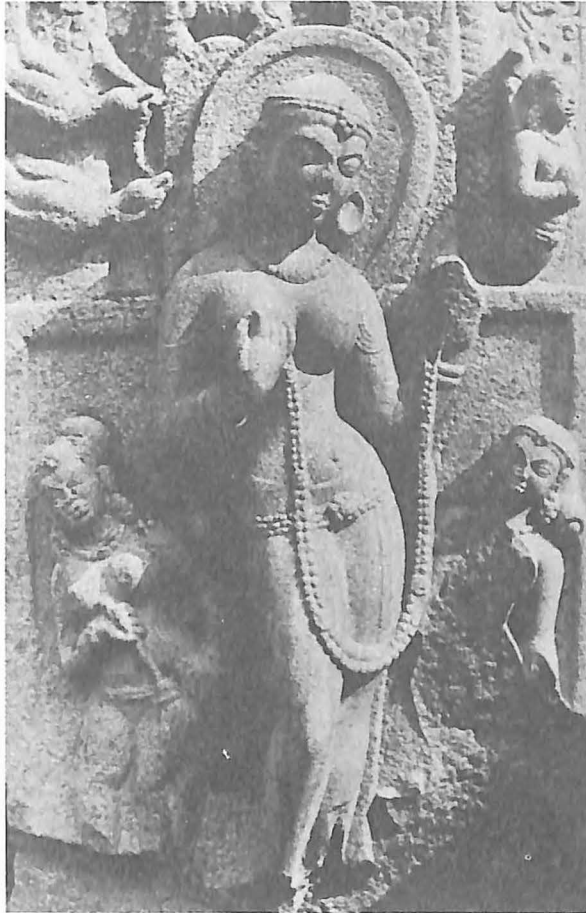
Foremost is the *shalabhanjika* motif, which is seen on door *jambha*-s as railing and bracket figures throughout the whole range of Indian sculpture. We have held the view that while this motif can be seen as the expression of a



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'fertility cult' and a long-accepted myth of the *ashoka-dohada*, its formal elements are invariably related to the positions and movements termed in the *Natyashastra* and other texts as the *chari-s*. The *Natyashastra* speaks of one foot or leg movement culminating in certain positions, largely in 'place', called the *bhaumi chari-s* (earthly *chari-s*) and those that use both feet and legs, and indicate elevation from the ground, namely *akashiki chari-s* (aerial *chari-s*). The Indian sculptor makes frequent and prolific use of the movement patterns from the earliest times, even if the sculptural figure serves the purely functional purpose of a bracket as in Sanchi. Examples can be found from the Ranigumpha caves of Orissa

(circa first century B.C.) right till the seventeenth century in South India. Bharut, Mathura (in the early period) and Bhuvaneshwara, Konarak, and Khajuraho (of the medieval period) present a fascinating variety of the poses of sculptural figures which present the *shalabhanjika* motif. In Assam, although we do not find many examples of the motif in the early period, the medieval sculptures of the Ambari and other sites in Gauhati reveal a popular preoccupation with the motif. The Ambari and Gauhati examples have thus to be seen in relation to their precursors in Gauhati and in relation to contemporary developments in Khajuraho, Bhuvaneshwara and the Bengal school, roughly from the tenth to twelfth century A.D.



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The precursors of the Gauhati and Ambari *shalabhanjika*-s and *dvarapalika*-s are the two beautifully-executed figures of Ganga and Jamuna in the ruins of the Shiva temple, Dah-Parvatia, Tezpur (Darrang District) also called Daha Parvatia and belonging to the sixth century (Illus. 1, 1A, 1B). These undoubtedly recall to mind the Deogarh gate and the *jambha* figures of the Gupta period, the Besnagar Ganga,² and the female figures of the Elura caves (Illus. 2).³ The continuity of movement with a marked restraint is characteristic of all these figures. The Dah-Parvatia examples tell us of a similarity of approach, where each



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of the two figures has a *samapada* of one foot and a slight *kunchita* of the other foot. The knee of the leg, which has the *kunchita* foot, is slightly bent in all the examples. The *abhanga* is also clear and we find no sharp lines or angles. The upper torso is slightly bent without any accentuations and this is very close to the Besnagar Ganga. However, there is no tilt of the neck in either the Deogarh examples or the Besnagar Ganga, or in the Elura cave *jambha* figures. A close comparison of the examples of the three sites reveals very deep affinities, but also certain differences in the manner in which the same pose has been treated. What is true of the quality of flowing movement in the body is equally true of the drapery and the jewellery. The transparent skirt coming down to the ankles is evident in all these examples; so also is the waist girdle, and the economy of ornamentation, both of the upper and lower limbs. The coiffure, however, is distinctive in each case. Other distinguishing features are the spacing of the *gana*-s and minor figures who invariably accompany the motif.

But the ninth to eleventh century examples are a far cry from these early examples. In three examples from the Gauhati Museum, we find a marked change from a flowing curve to definite lines. The earlier flow is replaced by a terseness of treatment, which has some features in common with the Bhuvaneshwara, Khajuraho *shalabhanjika*-s and those of Rajasthan but there is also a distinctive



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regional character in all the examples. They cannot be mistaken for the figures of either Bhuvaneshwara or Khajuraho.

The *chauri*-bearer from the Majuli Tea Estate, Darrang District, (circa tenth century) stands frontally in a clear *samapada* of both feet, even if the feet have been broken now (Illus. 3). The deflection of the hip to one side and the torso to the opposite is clearly and precisely delineated. In none of the earlier examples of Assamese sculpture, do we see a *dola hasta* but here there is a perfect *dola hasta* of one arm and she holds the *chauri* in a half-*mushti* by the other. The bust is full and rounded and the neck is in *anchita*. While it would be impossible to identify the figure as a standard example of the *shalabhanjika*,



its stylistic features quite obviously make it one amongst the many interpretations of the same motif. The facial features of the figure, however, are distinctive and so are the ear ornaments. The other *dvarapalika* (Illus. 4) shows a further development of movement, for here she stands in a clear *svastika chari* position, with one foot in *samapada* and the other in *kunchita*. While she holds the *khadga* in one hand, with the other she holds a *darpana*. This holding of the *darpana* is quite different from the treatment of this motif in either Bhuvaneshwara or Khajuraho. Each single movement of the upper and lower limbs is clearly seen in terms of parallel vertical lines instead of curves. The modelling is bold. The tiara on her head is a characteristic feature of many sculptures from Assam and we realise that it is this tiara which then crystallises into the crown and head-dress of the sculptures of Assam in the Ahom period. We find thus that although the thematic content and the principles of movement are similar, the treatment is distinctive. Finally there is yet a third example from Gauhati, called the *Alasya-Kanya*, which is a perfect depiction of the *shalabhanjika* motif. Here while there is a *svastika* of the feet, the *kunchita* foot is replaced by the *agratalasanchara* and the curve of the torso is markedly attenuated. There are



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many ornaments and we observe a greater sense of movement. While the three are in a series, there is a progressive development from a rather rigid *samapada* position to dynamic *svastika* movement. Taken together they are a continuation of the trends seen in the Ganga and Jamuna figures of Dah-Parvatia but also related to contemporary trends of the ninth and tenth century. All these are also related to the sculptures found in the Tezpur temple in Darrang District.⁴

The motif of the *vidyadhara* or the *gandharva* has also become known to Indian sculpture since the second or first century B.C. and one of the earliest examples comes from the Ranigumpha caves of Udaygiri and Khandgiri. Gradually it becomes a pervasive motif in not only Indian but all South-east Asian sculpture. While not many examples of the motif are found in the sculptural remains of Assam, there is an outstanding example of the motif from Gauhati (Illus. 5). Encircled in an oval shape, the *vidyadhara* is seen in a characteristic pose of the *vrshchika kuttala karana*, holding a garland. Its treatment is frontal, without that twist of the waist, so characteristic of the Khajuraho Dulaheo Temple *vidyadhara*-s. There are, however, many features which link it to the



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vrshchika karana motif seen in the Rajiva Lochana Temple and also in Khajuraho.⁵ Elsewhere we have drawn attention to the characteristic feature of the depiction of the flying motif, which to our mind draws its inspiration from the movements of this generic group described in the *Natyashastra* as the *vrshchika karana*-s.⁶ The one leg infolded, with a marked bend of the knee, and the other free in space to extend backward or sideways is known to many schools of Indian sculpture. The example from Gauhati also belongs to this family where an identical approach is adopted. Again, except for the special headgear, which is evident in most Assamese sculpture, the figure is very much a part and parcel of the larger group of flying figures found in all parts of India.⁷ All these (with the solitary exception of two examples from Sanchi) are *gandharva*-s or *vidyadhara*-s, without a pair of wings and seen in a movement cadence called the

vrshchika karana. The example from Gauhati is in the *vrshchika kuttila* with one infolded leg and the other extended with an out-flexion of the calf. In treatment, it differs from the Aihole figures and the Rajiva Lochana figure,⁸ on account of an almost frontal treatment of the torso. The Khajuraho *vidyadhara*⁹ is the closest mirror image, both for the position of the legs and the treatment of the torso. Purely stylistically, the Gauhati *vidyadhara* lies somewhere between the Aihole and the Khajuraho *vidyadhara*-s.

Judging from the prevalence of the *shalabhanjika* motif and its depiction and that of the flying *vidyadhara*, it would appear that there was an affinity between the sculptural reliefs in Assam in the ninth-tenth century and those in many other parts of India.

Although both these categories are important indicators for recognizing the adherence to certain movement patterns of the *Natyashastra* tradition, the more valuable reliefs are those which capture the dance scene per se. Here again we have significant evidence from Assam. In the ruins of the Tezpur Town, Darrang District, there are a few panels which show a pair of dancers carved within a rectangular frame.¹⁰ In each there is a dancer accompanied by a musician, either a drummer or a flutist. The dancer in nearly five of these panels is in an identical pose. The lower limbs are invariably in an *ardhamandali*, with bent knees and all that we have termed as the *kshipta* position of the legs and knees. In each case, one foot is in *samapada* and the other in *kunchita*. In short, the position of the lower limbs is common to all the *karana*-s of the *ghurnita* or the *valita* variety. One arm is raised, with the hand at the level of the head, and the other is extended in a *lata hasta* in front. Since, except for a single example, one arm does not cross over to the other side but remains in the centre, it cannot be identified as the *kari hasta* movement. The differences arise out of a variety of ways in which the torso and neck movement is captured by the sculptor. The closest parallel of a similar movement comes from dance figures seen in Rajasthan¹¹ where we find a single dancer enclosed in rectangular areas. They are seen in a variety of poses. A few amongst these capture a movement reminiscent of that captured by the Assam reliefs.

Of great significance is a scene of music and dance from the tenth century from Gauhati where, inspite of its present mutilated condition, one can quite clearly observe an attempt at capturing a full music and dance sequence dynamically. There are three figures, one of a dancer in the middle, the second of a drummer and the third of a seated figure who may well have been a vocalist, or a director (akin to a *nattuvanar*) of the performance. Both the drummer and the dancer are depicted in an open *ardhamandali*, with a much wider space between the feet than the examples quoted above. The proportion of the upper and the lower limbs leaves an impression of an elongation, a greater sense of flow than those of the *dvarapalika*-s and the *shalabhanjika*-s or the pair each of musician and dancer in the Tezpur panels. Although it is not possible to be certain about the nature of the foot-contact, it would appear that while one foot is in *samapada*, the other was possibly in a *kunchita*. The drummer holds a drum of the *alingya* variety and has a slight *abhanga*. The dancer is in a *prshthasvastika*, and there is definite turning around the *trika*. Many examples of this type of movement can be seen in other parts of India,

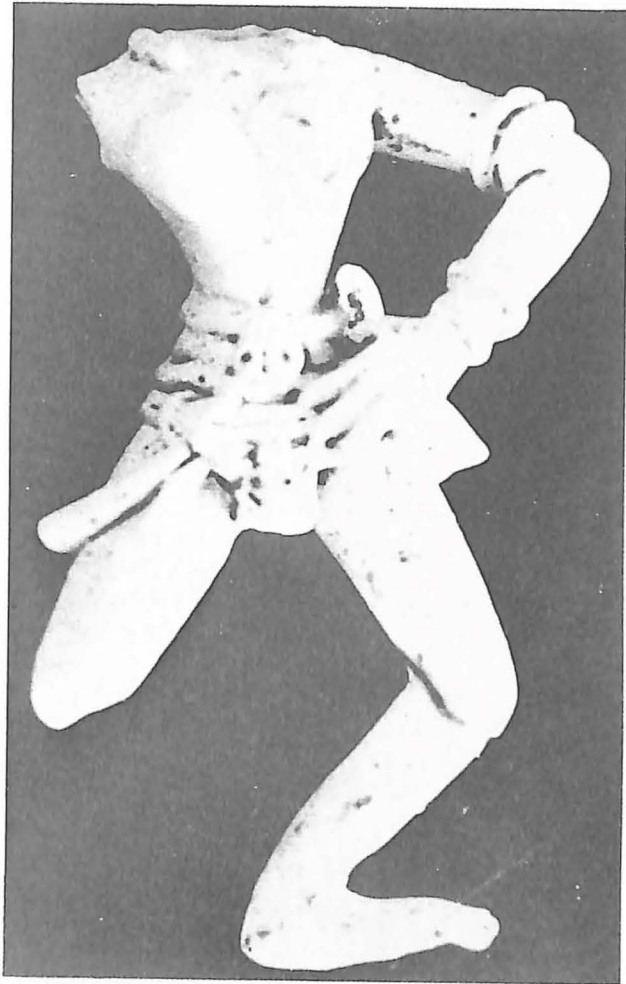
particularly the Śasabahu Temple, Gwalior, and in Kerala.¹² One hand is raised high above the head and the other is gracefully extended to its own side in a *lata hasta*. Had this scene been complete, it would have received the same attention as the *prshthasvastika* seen in a figure from Allahabad.

The entire composition makes it clear that in Assam, as in other places, there was a style of dance which depended for its kinetic vocabulary on the *ardhamandali*, the *svastika* and *prshthasvastika* and *uromandala hasta-s* and the *lata hasta-s*. Both the Tezpur and Gauhati sculptures offer evidence of the fact that at least until the tenth century we cannot identify any movement which we today associate with either Manipuri or for that matter *sattra* dancing although a *kshipta* position of the knees is seen in the latter. Nor do we find the typical *khāl* or *pung*. The drums are all smaller.

Finally, to this period belong the two important finds from Ambari, not in stone, but instead in terra-cotta. There is a female torso which without doubt was the figure of a dancer, even if the lower limbs and the arms are



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today missing (Illus. 6). M. K. Dhavlikar mentions this figure in his report on the Ambari excavations.¹³ He says, "When complete this would have been one of the finest figures of its class in the entire range of Indian art. The sensitive modelling bears eloquent testimony to the high attainment of the artist. The voluptuous breasts and the attenuated waist add to the sensuous curves of the body. The figure is probably that of a semi-divine nymph (*apsara*). Stylistically, it is related to the *surasundari*-s on the Sun Temple of Konarak (Orissa). Made of extremely fine kaolin, it was fashioned in two parts, the front and the back pressed out of two separate moulds and then joined together. The thin-ribbon of clay joining the two parts is visible at the sides. On the basis of stratigraphical and stylistic evidence, the figure can be dated to *circa* 8th to 10th century A.D."

This general description speaks of the aesthetic qualities of the figure and while we may not agree that she is related to the *surasundari*-s of the Sun Temple, Konarak, it is clear that she does manifest a highly evolved tradition of sculpture, fully acquainted with the norms of sculpture technique, and using these norms with consummate artistic skill. Indeed its significance is enhanced by the fact that perhaps it is the only terra-cotta figure in the round which

captures movement so perfectly. Its proportions, 18.1 cm height and 10.3 cm width of the breasts and 9.4 cm width of a narrow waist, are impressive. While examples of free standing sculpture in stone and in bronze are found in other parts in India, there are hardly any other examples of terra-cotta figures of these proportions in the round which depict the full human figure in a moment of dance. Although no definite surmises can be made, it would perhaps not be incorrect to speculate that her lower limb position was in an *ardhamandali* and that the arms were in a position akin to that which we have mentioned in the reliefs referred to above.

The other terra-cotta figure reinforces our impression for here is a perfect example of the *ardhamandali* in absolute symmetry (Illus. 7). The modelling is as perfect and the movement is without doubt of a dancer arrested in a dynamic moment of movement. Its chiselled quality, its perfect proportion and balance make it a figure which is in a class by itself and is an invaluable addition to our knowledge of the prevalence of a developed tradition of both sculpture and dance in Assam. Its *ardhamandali* is without any deflection of the hip in an *abhanga*, a feature characteristic of the Bhuvaneshwara and Konarak sculptures. In this respect, if a comparison must be made, it can be only to the central dancer of the famous dance panel from Harshagiri, Rajasthan.¹⁴ As a terra-cotta figure depicting the dance it is unique and needs to be better and more widely known.





For comparison we can refer here to an example of a tenth-eleventh century Shiva dancing figure from Numaligarh where a similar type of movement is captured. Although the two media are different, stylistically one can seek clear



affinities (Illus. 8). Indeed the latter is also very close to the dancing Tripurari Shiva from the Deoparbat Numaligarh figure from Golaghat.¹⁵ Apart from the Tripurari Shiva mentioned above, who is seen in an *urdhvajanu* movement, there is the Chandrashekhara Shiva dancing on a bull found in the river-bed, Uzanbazar, Gauhati. His pose, too, is in *urdhvajanu* (Illus. 9).¹⁶ A slightly later Nataraja from Ambari is also in *urdhvajanu* (Illus. 10). Other examples from Ambari of Vishnu, Surya, Ganga and Jamuna tell us the same story.

This then brings us to the last category of the dancing *gana*-s and the deities. Here, too, not many examples are to be found, but we have enough examples to support the view that, as in the case of the first three groups, there was a consanguinity of approach. The principles of movement followed in the depiction of a Shiva *gana* (tenth-eleventh century A.D.) and that of the Nrtta Ganapati are similar to what we have noticed in all the other figures. In the Shiva *gana*, a definite *asana* has been captured, but the Nrtta Ganapati is in a powerful dancing movement; in a *kshipta* of the legs, one foot in *samapada*, and the other in *kunchita*; the arms, one in *uromandala* and the other in a clear *kari hasta* (Illus. 11). There is also a marked deflection of the hip balanced with an extension of the torso in the opposite direction. The terra-cotta dancing figure is an example of perfect balance and symmetry in restraint; the dancing Ganesha of a powerful movement in exuberance and asymmetry. One diagonal



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relates the movement of the arm and the opposite leg and another is formed by the line of the *kari hasta* and the flowing trunk. The impression of a dynamic tension and joyful abundance is created by the intersecting lines of these diagonals, all placed within the circumscribed space of the horizontal rectangular area. A very different treatment of the theme is seen in the Ganesha dancing on the *vahana* on the walls of the Kamakhya Temple.¹⁷ Here he is set in a vertical frame, and one can discern the clear movement of the *samapada* feet and the *kunchita* foot with a *dola hasta*. Although the example is not quite as chiselled as the famous example from the Bharata Kala Bhavan, Varanasi,¹⁸ it is a close parallel of the latter. However, the dancing Ganesha from Barpukhurir Holeswar, Tezpur, compares favourably with the Varanasi dancing Ganesha.¹⁹

We see thus that between the sixth and twelfth century Assam witnessed a sustained development of an architectural and sculptural tradition which had many interesting points of contact with parallel movements in other parts of India. Also, inspite of these affinities, one observes a distinctive Assamese character which begins to make its way from the sculptural reliefs from Daha Parvatia and culminates in the regional school of Kamakhya. This conclusion can be reached also by examining motifs other than those we have considered here, but since our main concern was with the evolution of movement patterns, the few examples included here illustrate the Indian phenomenon of an interaction between different schools at a given moment of time, as also a gradual evolution of a distinctive regional style.

While one could go on to narrate the history of Assamese sculpture in the post-Kamakhya period and the many significant finds, mostly in terra-cotta, found in different sites between the seventeenth and eighteenth century, these belong to another type of development which has many local variants unconnected with what we find in other parts of India. From amongst these, one is particularly interesting. This is a dance scene where we find three dancers, all in a *svastika* pose. The *ardhamandali* has given place to an erect posture with a definite elongation of the figures. The central figure possibly has a *karkata hasta* and the other two are seen in an *alapadma* of one hand. Finally, there is the dancing figure of an ascetic belonging to the eighteenth century. This figure is unique on account of the ritualistic type of dance it depicts. The horizontal lines of the torso, suggesting ribs, are in deep contrast to the vertical lines of the upper and lower limbs. The *trishula* and the other implements are quite obviously indicative of the ritualistic character of the dance; the knotted coiffure, the tilt of the head and the distinctive open position of the lower limbs in an *ardhamandali* (which may have been nearer to the *mandalasthana* rather than the *vaishnavasthana*) make the figure unique. There is hardly any other stone relief or terra-cotta figure which portrays a similar type of ritual dance. More needs to be known about this figure from textual or creative literature before any final conclusions can be drawn from this sculptural relief alone.

While we have here restricted ourselves to the sculptural evidence and have not related it to the inscriptional records and the fund of historical evidence in chronicles and creative literature found in Assam relating to the dance, it is necessary to point out that such portrayal of dance movement could have been possible only if there was in fact a flourishing tradition of the dance at different levels of society and these examples could not be based either on the imagination of the artist or models found in other parts of India. Although little is known about the history of theatre and dance in Assam of the pre-Shankaradeva period, there is enough inscriptional record of a flourishing tradition of the *devadasi*-s in the different temples of Assam. Perhaps the earliest reference comes from the Tezpur Copper Plate Grant of Vanamala (ninth century A.D.) which speaks of a group of women who were dedicated to the temples. There is a clear reference here to the offer of the *devadasi*-s to the temple of Hatakesvara or Hataka Sulin at Tezpur.²⁰ Scholars like Dr. P. C. Chowdhury and Dr. B. K. Kakati have drawn our attention to the use of the word *Dulaharigana* for women dedicated to the temple.

Later, several references are found, during the Ahom rule, to the nature of land grants and the manner of worship in the Shiva and Vishnu temples. A careful perusal of the epigraphical evidence from Assam on which much valuable work has been done by Mr. Gait, Dr. Neog and others²¹ may yield corroborative evidence of these sculptural finds.

This would then need to be seen in relation to texts like the *Hastamuktavali* and the commentaries of the *Gita-Govinda*²² and the pictorial evidence in the *Chitra Bhagvata* and other texts.²³ Thus far, from a perusal of some of this material, one can gather information on the nature of the shrines, the priesthood and the tradition of the *devadasi*. But except for the *Hastamuktavali*, no epigraphical record or literary evidence throws light on the technical aspects of the dance, such as the pose, *bhangi* and the various *nrtta* movements. However, this requires further probing and no conclusions can yet be drawn on the basis of the published material. Perhaps Assamese scholars will without doubt unearth literary evidence which will support the sculptural evidence and thus help in reconstructing the history of dance which ultimately culminated in a style of dance which we today recognize as the *Deodhani* tradition on the one hand, and the *Oja-palli* and *Sattra* tradition on the other. This article is an exploratory attempt on the basis of a few (but certainly not all) examples of the sculptural finds of the earlier period.

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Notes:

1. Vatsyayan, Kapila. *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts*. Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, 1968. Chapter IV, Sculpture and Dance, hereafter referred to as V., K. *CIDLA*.
2. See Agrawal. *V. Gupta Art*. Plate for Deogarh door-frame; for Besnagar Ganga.
3. V., K. *op. cit. CIDLA*. Fig. 15. Female figures from Rameshwara Caves.
4. Nath, R. M. *The Background of Assamese Culture*, published by A. K. Nath, Shillong, 1948, Pl. X, 3. Dancing images, Bamuni Hill, Tezpur, hereafter referred to as Nath, R. M. *B. of A.C.*
5. V., K. *op. cit. CIDLA*. Figs. 49 and 50, Fig. 49 from Rajiva Lochana Temple and Fig. 50 from Dulahdeo Temple from Khajuraho.
6. V., K. *Vrshchika Karana*, an article in the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Arts. (JISOA)* Vol. V. (New Series), Part II, 1972-73.
7. V., K. *op. cit. CIDLA*. Figs. 39 to 55.
8. *Ibid*, Fig. 44 and 49.
9. *Ibid*, Fig. 50 from Khajuraho.
10. Nath, R. M. *B. of A.C.* Pl. X, 4 & 5, R. M. Nath describes these as scenes of Bihu dancing, but there is nothing in common with these examples and what one observes of Bihu dance today.
11. V., K. *op. cit. CIDLA*. Fig. 90. A scene of dancers from Jodhpur. (See third figure from right).
12. *Ibid*. Fig. 97, dance figure from Sasabahu temple, Gwalior (11th century) and Fig. 98 from the Trivikramamangal temple, Kerala (12th century).
13. Dhavalikar, M. K. 'Archaeology of Gauhati', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. XXX-XXXII, 1973, pp. 137-149, description on page 143. Also see. 'Ambari Excavations', *Journal of Poona University*, Vol. 35, 1972; *Indian Archaeology*, 1968-69. A review *Excavations at Ambari*, pages 3-4 and Pl. IV (b).
14. V., K. *op. cit. CIDLA*, Fig. 91, from Sikar: Harshagiri, the Purana Mahadev temple, 10th century and also see Fig. 93, figures on the left in the Chalukyan panel of Shiva and Parvati on Nandi.
15. Nath, R. M. *B. of A.C.* Plate XII, Tripurari Shiva from the ruins of Deoparbat Numaligarh, Golaghat.
16. *Ibid*. Pl. XIV, ii. Chandrashekhara Shiva dancing on Vehicle (River bed Uzanbasar, Gauhati).
17. *Ibid*. Pl. XIII, iii. Ganesha dancing (on the wall of the Kamakhya temple).
18. Bharat Kala Bhavan. See Ganesha.

19. Nath, R. M. *op. cit. B. of A. C.* Pl. XVII, ii. Dancing Ganesha from Barpukhurir, Holeshvara, Tezpur.
20. Rajathananda Das Gupta, 'The Institution of the Devadasis in Assam', *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XLII, Part II, August, 1965, Serial No. 128, pp. 555-578 and particularly pp. 570-571.
Also see Bhattacharya, V., *Kamarupa Sasanvali*, pp. 62-64 and Chowdhury P. C., *A. History of the Civilization of the People of Assam*.
21. Neog, Maheswar, *Prachyarsasanvali*: an anthology of royal charters inscribed on stone, copper, etc. of Kamarupa, from 1205 A.D. to 1847 A.D. English Introduction and Text.
Gait, Edward A. A. *History of Assam*, 2nd edition, Calcutta, 1926. Bhuiyan S. K. *Kamarupar Buranji*, Gauhati, 1930, etc.
22. Neog, Maheswar, 'Two Commentaries of the *Gita-Govinda*.' *The Journal of the Music Academy*, Vol. XXV, 1954-55.
23. *Bhagavata-Purana* Finds. Two illustrated manuscripts; one of Book VI painted by Vadha Ligira and the other of the Tenth Skanda found in Bali-Sattra.
See illustrations in Nath, R. M. *B. of A. C.* Plates XXXV and Neog, Maheswar, *The Art of Painting in Assam*, Gauhati, 1959, Figs. 6 and 8 and 22 and 23. The last depicts a *maharasa*.

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Illustrations :

1. Dah-Parvatia from Tezpur Gupta temple doorway, with Yamuna and Ganga, *circa* 6th century A.D.
- 1A. Detail of above: Ganga.
- 1B. Detail of above: Yamuna.
2. River Goddess. Sita ki Nahani Cave, Ellora, *circa* 6th century A.D.
3. *Shalabhanjika* from Majuli, Darrang Dist., Assam, *circa* 10th century A.D.
4. *Dvarapalika* from Majuli, Darrang Dist., Assam, *circa* 10th century A.D.
5. *Vidyadhara* from Ambari, Gauhati Museum, Assam, *circa* 10th century A.D.
6. Broken torso; terra-cotta, Ambari, Dept. of Anthropology Museum, University of Gauhati, Assam, *circa* 8th century A.D.
7. Terra-cotta figure of dancer, Ambari, Dept. of Anthropology Museum, University of Gauhati, Assam, *circa* 8th century A.D.
8. *Gayasura* from Numaligarh, Gauhati Museum, Assam, *circa* 10th century A.D.
9. *Nataraja* from Uzanbazar, Gauhati, Gauhati Museum, *circa* 9th-10th centuries A.D.
10. *Nataraja* from Ambari, Gauhati Museum, Assam, *circa* 10th century A.D.
11. Dance of Ganesha and Kartikeya, Gauhati, Gauhati Museum, Assam, *circa* 9th century A.D.